

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1918

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 6292

LIMDIS

FOR ASST SECRETARY TODMAN FROM CHARGE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, SHUM, AR, US
SUBJECT: DRAFT MEMCON: AMBASSADOR TODMAN'S
MEETINGS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER ALLARA

REF: BUENOS AIRES 6127

FOLLOWING IS DRAFT MEMCON FOR ASSISTANT
SECRETARY'S APPROVAL:

1. QUOTE AMBASSADOR TODMAN AND THE CHARGE
D'AFFAIRES MET WITH DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER
CAPTAIN GULATER OSCAR ALLARA AND MINISTER
JUAN CARLOS ARLIA FOR 45 MINUTES AT ALLARA'S OFFICE
AT 0830 ON MONDAY, AUGUST 15. THIS WAS
FOLLOWED BY A "WORKING SESSION," ALSO
FORTY-FIVE MINUTES LONG, IN WHICH ALL MEMBERS
OF MR. TODMAN'S PARTY PARTICIPATED ALONG
WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS AMOTT, HALLMAN AND
FREEMAN. THE DEPUTY MINISTER MET AGAIN
WITH THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY AT LUNCH AND DINNER,
WHERE DISCUSSIONS WERE CONTINUED.

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2. PRIVATE MEETING - THIS SECTION OF THE MEETING WAS
DEVOTED PRIMARILY TO AN EXPOSITION BY THE ARGENTINE
OFFICIALS OF THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DECLINE OF THE
COUNTRY WHICH LEFT THE ARMED FORCES WITH NO ALTERNATIVE
BUT TO ASSUME POWER. MFA OFFICIALS EXPRESSED RESENTMENT AND
LACK OF UNDERSTANDING AT THE FOREIGN CRITICISM OF THE
GOVERNMENT'S ATTEMPTS TO RESTORE ORDER AND ASSURED

AMB. TODMAN THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS OPERATING ACCORDING TO CONSTITUTIONAL AND STRICTLY LEGAL NORMS.

MR. TODMAN DURING HIS INTERVIEW RAISED SPECIFICALLY THE CASE OF DR. LAURICIO LOPEZ, WHICH HAS RAISED BROAD CONCERN IN BOTH ARGENTINA AND THE US (SEE BUENOS AIRES 6111).

3. WORKING SESSION: GENERAL AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS - AFTER THE MEETING WAS EXPANDED INTO A "WORKING SESSION," TODMAN DESCRIBED PROBLEMS OF MARITIME BOUNDARIES AND OTHER PRESSING MATTERS WHICH LED TO OUR CURRENT INTENTION TO ESTABLISH A LIAISON OFFICE IN CUBA AND THE CUBANS A SIMILAR ESTABLISHMENT IN WASHINGTON. TODMAN STRESSED THAT US HUMAN RIGHTS INTENTIONS WOULD BE AS ACTIVELY SOUGHT IN CUBA AS IN OTHER COUNTRIES WITH WHICH THE US HAS FULL RELATIONS.

TODMAN THEN SPOKE OF A NEED TO REGULARIZE THE ANOMALOUS SITUATION OF THE PANAMA CANAL, AND DESCRIBED OUR HOPE THAT THE AGREEMENT WE HAVE MADE WITH PANAMA CAN QUICKLY BE RATIFIED BY THE US. (AT A LUNCHEON WHICH TOOK PLACE LATER DURING DAY CHARGE PRESENTED TEXT OF PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT ON PANAMA CANAL TREATY, WHICH REACHED US MORNING 8/15.)

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AT BOTH MORNING WORKING SESSION AND THE DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER'S LUNCHEON WE FOUND ARGENTINES MOST ANXIOUS TO TALK ABOUT BILATERAL ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS, WHICH THEY PROFESSED TO SEE AS WEAKENING BECAUSE OF ARGENTINA'S GROWING BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DEFICIT VIS-A-VIS THE US. A SPECIFIC SUGGESTION THAT EMERGED WAS THAT THE INACTIVE ARGENTINE-US ECONOMIC COMMISSION (FOUNDED SOME 10 YEARS AGO BUT NOW MOSTLY FORGOTTEN) ACQUIRE NEW LIFE. THE ARGENTINES BELIEVE THIS WILL HELP TO IMPROVE ARGENTINA'S TRADE SITUATION WITH THE US, WHICH IS IN CHRONIC IMBALANCE. DEPUTY ECONOMY ADVISOR VIGNAUD ASSERTED THAT CONGRESS HAS TAKEN A NUMBER OF STEPS IN THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, DESPITE PROMISES AND GENUINE GOOD WILL ON THE PART OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH, WHICH HAVE HAD DELETERIOUS EFFECTS ON TRADE. HE CLAIMED THAT ARGENTINA HAD GENERALLY IMPROVED ITS OVERALL EXPORT SALES BY SOME 15 PERCENT RECENTLY, WHILE ITS EXPORTS TO THE US HAD FALLEN FROM 8 PERCENT TO 6 PERCENT, VIGNAUD CITED PARTICULARLY ARGENTINA'S DISPLEASURE OVER US SPECIAL STEEL QUOTAS AND SANITARY IMPORT REGULATIONS FOR MEAT. PARTICULAR SOURCES OF COMPLAINT WERE THAT THE US ALLOWED STEEL QUOTAS TO IMPORTANT PRODUCERS WHILE PUTTING ARGENTINA INTO A "BASKET" OF SMALLER PRODUCERS

AND THAT US SANITATION REGULATIONS REFUSED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THERE CAN BE AFTOSA-FREE AREAS OF ARGENTINA FROM WHICH UNPROCESSED MEAT OUGHT TO BE PERMITTED ACCESS INTO THE US.

WITH REGARD TO ECONOMIC CONSULTATIONS MFA ECONOMIC ADVISOR PAULINO MUSSACHIO STATED THAT A PARTICULAR INTEREST OF HIS MINISTRY WAS TO CONSULT REGARDING FORTH-COMING INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCES IN ORDER TO RECONCILE ARGENTINE-US POSITIONS.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 6292

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FOR ASST SECRETARY TODMAN FROM CHARGE

4. WORKING SESSION HUMAN RIGHTS - ALSO TOUCHED UPON AT MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS WORKING SESSION WAS OUR SUGGESTION THAT THE LATIN AMERICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS CAN SERVE A USEFUL FUNCTION IN ITS FIELD AND DESERVES TO BE STRENGTHENED. ARGENTINE RESPONSE WAS AVOWEDLY A RESTATEMENT OF POSITION TAKEN AT GRENADA OAS MEETING: THE COMMISSION MUST EXPAND ITS DEFINITION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN ORDER TO INVESTIGATE ACTS OF TERRORISM AGAINST A GOVERNMENT AND ITS PEOPLE, AND COMMISSION MUST ALSO PAY MORE ATTENTION TO ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND THE "RIGHTS" OF PEOPLE TO ECONOMIC WELLBEING.

ARGENTINES SHOWED PARTICULAR SENSITIVITY REGARDING INTERNATIONAL VIEW OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS HERE WHEN THE SUBJECT CAME TO SUBCOMMITTEE ON DISCRIMINATION AND RIGHTS OF MINORITIES MEETING NOW IN GENEVA. JUAN CARLOS ARLIA, WHO HEADS MINISTRY'S WORKING GROUP ON HUMAN RIGHTS, ASSERTED THAT ARGENTINA HAD BEEN "SAVED" BY THE SOVIET UNION, WHEN THE U.S.S.R. CAST ITS VOTE IN A

3 TO 2 (INCLUDING US) BREAK ON WHETHER ARGENTINA SHOULD
BE CITED FOR ITS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. DEPUTY
MINISTER ALLARA CITED AT ONE POINT A US SOURCE ("REPORT
OF THE TASK FORCE ON DISORDER AND TERRORISM" OF THE
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NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND
STANDARDS, OF DECEMBER 1976) TO EFFECT HIS POINT THAT
IN SITUATIONS OF INSURRECTION CIVIL AUTHORITIES SHOULD
DEFER TO THE MILITARY. DEPUTY SECRETARY ALSO CITED
POLICE STATISTICS FROM AROUND THE WORLD IN AN ATTEMPT
TO SHOW THAT ARGENTINA'S MISSING PERSONS RECORD IS NOT
SIGNIFICANTLY WORSE THAN IN OTHER COUNTRIES.
END QUOTE
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